

# **PEFC Strategy 2013-2016**

## **Summary**

Becoming the Partner of Choice

## INTRODUCTION

PEFC has a strong role in promoting best practices in the forest, with specific consideration to the role of small-, family- and community forest owners. PEFC's bottom-up approach to forest certification is considered well-suited to have a positive impact on the ground and to best support people in managing forests sustainably.

The previous strategy (2007-2012) focused on growth to ensure the firm establishment, legitimacy and acceptance of PEFC in the market place. That legitimacy is now firmly established and PEFC delivers value to stakeholders.

Looking forward to the next five years, PEFC strives to further strengthen its positive contribution towards safeguarding the world's forest resources, particularly through a better utilization of the decentralized nature of the organization.

PEFC will be doing so by:

- Fostering the **relevancy of its standards** to existing and emerging issues and activities impacting forest management through continuous development and targeted projects;
- Increasing **awareness and knowledge** of PEFC activities among stakeholders and users to better equip them to provide accurate and comprehensive information about PEFC, sustainable forest management and its certification; and
- Streamlining **processes and activities** to become more efficient and effective in its work both as an association of independent organizations and its support network; and within the Secretariat.

By achieving these objectives, PEFC will continue to advance its mission and strengthen sustainable forest management.

### **Overarching Strategic Goal (2013-2017)**

To become the partner of choice for all engaged in sustainable forest management

This strategy is the result of a 15 month process involving PEFC members, the board, stakeholders and staff. The strategy was endorsed by the PEFC Board of Directors in October 2012 and adopted by the PEFC General Assembly in November 2012.

### **Challenges and Opportunities (2012-2017)**

The last five years have seen a rapid growth in both forest certification (forest area and chain of custody certification) and its acceptance in public and private procurement policies. Globally, the certified area has increased by forty percent and chain of custody certification has increased fourfold in number.

Although most of the growth has been in the Northern hemisphere (Europe and North America), Asia and Latin America are becoming increasingly important. This is a result of the activities of major drivers for certification, such as procurement policies and practices and the stakeholders influencing them.

Growth in sustainable forest management (SFM) and its certification is still geographically too limited and challenges exist to expansion: limited capacity and resources, competing land uses, and the perceived low value of forests to society. Opportunities exist to expand SFM by increasing the value of certification to stakeholders, primarily through its integration as a tool in other verification mechanisms, but also through initiatives to improve SFM, and mitigation and adaptation of climate change initiatives. In addition to technical and market outreach tools, social and environmental components are crucial to success, and PEFC must partner with other key actors in the SFM arena to demonstrate the advantages of sustainable working forests, and add value to stakeholders.

PEFC offers global value, and champions sustainable, working forests. However, it still has much work to do and so sets out five key strategic issues which need to be addressed to achieve a significant increase in PEFC's visibility, and thus its value to stakeholders over the next five years.

1. PEFC must consistently represent a common identity to better demonstrate its relevancy to the existing supply chain and sustainable development arena;
2. PEFC will develop and disseminate a suite of activities and products that will add value to stakeholders and the wider SFM movement;
3. PEFC will ensure its positioning as the system of choice, adding value to its members and the market;
4. PEFC must extend its access to financial resources beyond just its members to expand its brand in the market; and
5. PEFC will rigorously pursue organisational effectiveness to ensure greatest value for money and optimised delivery mechanisms.

PEFC intends to become the preferred service provider and partner of choice for all engaged in sustainable forest management. PEFC will focus on being a visible and trusted brand, positioned to provide a range of products which add value to users, stakeholders, partners and collaborators.

## **Strategic Programmes**

### **1. Market Outreach & System Growth**

Expanding sustainable forest management is at the heart of PEFC's activities and supported by both forest certification and chain of custody certification. To further penetrate the market requires both targeted sector specific outreach (e.g. downstream actors) and regional focus (with an emphasis on areas where PEFC is not well represented: Asia (China, Indonesia etc), Eastern Europe (including Russia), Africa, and parts of South America). This will be supported by appropriate communication and coordination tools and mechanisms.

### **2. System Integrity**

A substantial part of future growth (both in forest and chain of custody certification) is expected to take place in countries with limited/no presence in PEFC certification. In addition, there is an increasing necessity to demonstrate the integrity of the whole PEFC system at all levels. A continuous improvement of the various procedures, technical processes, mechanisms, and standards is therefore necessary to further strengthen and protect the PEFC brand and value long-term. Internally, this calls for the identification of potentials for improvements in terms of effective administration, co-ordination and organization with appropriate follow-up actions.

### **3. Partner of Choice/ Resources**

Stakeholder engagement, Collaboration, and support are of fundamental importance to PEFC's aim of being the partner of choice, beyond standard setting. Key partners can demonstrate support to expanding SFM through certification in general and through PEFC in particular by becoming members, providing financial and in-kind support, and by acting as ambassadors, advocates and spokespeople for PEFC. PEFC's activities will continue to identify and nurture potential new and existing partners, influencers, important stakeholders, and funders.

### **4. Training & Capacity Building**

Organizations have varying levels of knowledge, skills and ability to implement certification and/or deliver certified product to the market. There is a shortage of programs and institutions offering training on PEFC system implementation. PEFC will therefore develop cross-cutting training programs/training suite and deliver training activities (including technical, advocacy, marketing and communication training) to target audience on an ongoing basis.

### **5. Product development & Relevancy**

An increasing number of initiatives and issues (beyond the traditional forest-sector) with close linkages to sustainable forest management are catching the attention and imagination of stakeholders, from PES to biomass to carbon certification to REDD+, yet all too often the link to forest certification is overlooked. PEFC will continue to follow and contribute to such initiatives, advocate the potential linkages, and consider and, as appropriate, potential adaption to its requirements to further increase their relevancy and potential benefits to certified entities. Engagement in projects with partner organization through mechanisms such as the Collaboration Fund will further contribute to both the continuous development and relevancy of PEFC products.

### **6. Inform & Influence**

Continued acceptance in the marketplace and identification and penetration of new market opportunities is a significant benefit for certified forest owners and companies as well as PEFC members. This requires PEFC to advocate the benefits of its work specifically to those that decide procurement policies and practices, are responsible for purchasing and sales, and can create demand for PEFC at all levels of the supply chain. Sound research has the potential to support such outreach activities.

### **Conclusion**

PEFC operates in a rapidly changing external environment and must be responsive and adaptive to meet challenges and to capitalize on opportunities. The organization must create opportunities where gaps exist in the market congruent with the vision and mission of PEFC.

Over the last five years PEFC already has made significant strides in increasing the amount of certified material that is available to customers through a significant increase of chain of custody certifications. Greater awareness and acceptance has been achieved through independent verification of PEFC's delivery of sustainable timber products by over 25 key public and association procurement policies. This coupled with active market outreach activities to key sectors including multinationals has ensured PEFC labeled products are visible to the public in numerous countries.

In addition PEFC has increased its engagement with a wider range of forest stakeholders throughout the supply chain (including NGOs, IGOs and others) through a combination of targeted stakeholder outreach, a comprehensive revision process of its standards, enhanced communications and investment in collaboration projects. In addition to increasing the number of events which PEFC is requested to attend, it has also resulted in an increase in the diversity of stakeholders on the PEFC board to include indigenous people, expanded representation from Asia and downstream stakeholders such as retailers.

PEFC must now build on these gains and invest in adding value throughout the supply chain and increase its relevance to the wider SFM stakeholder and policy arena through this strategy.

PEFC's objective over the next five years is to establish visibility of its global value. We will do that by becoming the partner of choice for all those involved in the SFM arena. To achieve this objective PEFC will clarify its identity and communicate this to all stakeholders. PEFC will create and implement a range of products to allow it to increase impact by adding value and demonstrating the relevance of PEFC to other sustainability arena actors. A guiding document in this respect will be the Rio Forest Certification Declaration (see Appendix 5) approved by the 2010 General Assembly.

This in turn will allow PEFC to clearly position itself as a key actor and ensure growth and added value in the market to the clients and customers of PEFC as well as society as a whole. PEFC will need to identify and secure external resources, revisit and establish efficiencies gains in its operations to ensure it builds on improvements in the effectiveness of its operations as a network.

Increased awareness of, and engagement with PEFC will benefit PEFC's key stakeholders throughout the supply chain as well as other stakeholders in the SFM and wider sustainability arena.